

PH# 367401

DATA SHEET

Form 10-300
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	New Hampshire
COUNTY:	Grafton
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	MAY 21 1978

1. NAME

COMMON:	Swiftwater Covered Bridge
AND/OR HISTORIC:	Swiftwater Bridge

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Valley Road			
CITY OR TOWN: Bath		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Second	
STATE New Hampshire	CODE 03740	COUNTY: Grafton	CODE 009

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Town of Bath, New Hampshire		
STREET AND NUMBER: Selectmen's Office N.H. 10		
CITY OR TOWN: Bath	STATE: New Hampshire	CODE 03740

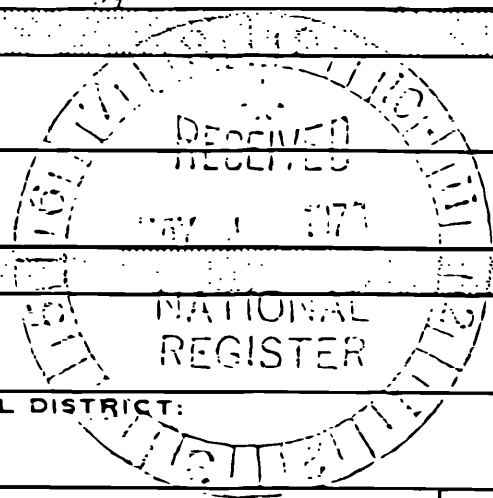
5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Grafton County Registry of Deeds		
STREET AND NUMBER: P.O. Box 208 Woodsville, N.H. 03875	Grafton County Courthouse N.H. 10, North Haverhill, N.H.	
CITY OR TOWN: North Haverhill	STATE: New Hampshire	CODE 03774

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: New Hampshire's Historic Preservation Plan		
DATE OF SURVEY: 1970 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local		
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: State of New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development		
STREET AND NUMBER: P.O. Box 856 Concord	State House Annex 25 Capitol Street	
CITY OR TOWN: Concord	STATE: New Hampshire	CODE 03301

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Present Physical Appearance: The Swiftwater Bridge crosses the Wild Ammonoosuc River on one span at Swiftwater village of Bath. The bridge connects Valley Road, a town road, on the north and south banks of the river.

The bridge is of Paddleford truss design with an arch. The truss is made of twenty braced panels separated into groups of nine on the bridge's north end and eleven on the bridge's south end by an unbraced, narrower panel. Each group is arranged about its own center, moving northerly, the center of the group of eleven panels occurs at the post shared by the sixth and seventh panels, while that of the nine panel group occurs between the fourth and fifth panels, moving northerly from the center unbraced panel. Panels are framed by 9" x 9" posts into which braces (8½" x 5") are notched, arranged about the centers described above. Counter-braces (7" x 3½") are wooden pinned to the inside faces of both posts and braces. The upper and lower chords are constructed of two sets of paired boards (each set with an overall size of 6" x 9½"). Each set is separated from its opposite member by a space of 3½" through which a notched part of each post passes and is pinned into place. The counterbraces pass between the two members of the inside set of each chord where they are notched and pinned into place.

The truss is laterally braced by beams which extend across the roadbed and jointed and wooden pinned to the top of each post. These beams are cross braced to each other by diagonals, except for the bay which corresponds to the unbraced panel of the truss walls.

Set inside the truss, rising from the abutment faces are two laminated wooden arches, each of fourteen members iron bolted and bracketed together with a combined size of 9½" x 35". Each arch has twelve iron suspension rods connecting to beams beneath the roadbed. Some of the iron bolts and especially the iron brackets near each abutment show signs of heavy corrosion, with a few of the brackets having corroded completely through.

The truss rests on timbers set on concrete footings at the top of each abutment. Both abutments are rectangular in shape constructed of some split granite and some irregular stones, laid up without mortar, with the exception of some new mortaring on the river face of each abutment.

The bridge has an overall length of 173'8" with a roadbed of 158'2"; its overall width is 20'10½" with a roadbed of 16'6½"; the portals have a vertical clearance of 11'4" which is posted. The roadbed of the bridge is made up of a larger center section of planks laid diagonally to the direction of the road flanked on either side by planks laid in the direction of the road. The roof is covered in corrugated metal and is set on a frame of rafters rising from the tops of the posts to a ridgepole which is further supported by diagonals extending from the inside face of

Continued on Continuation Sheet 1

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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(Continuation Sheet) 1.

STATE New Hampshire	
COUNTY Grafton	
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7. DESCRIPTION, continued

Present Physical Appearance, continued: most posts to the rafters near their junction with the ridgepole. The north end of the bridge has charred roof supports with some char marks on a few of the posts, confined mainly to the north-west side. The exterior of the bridge is sheathed in vertical boarding to an average height of eight feet above the roadbed, with one window in each of the two unbraced panels (one on either wall of the bridge). Both portals are covered in shingles, with some signs of damage to the south portal by a vehicle that was too high to pass. All exterior wood is weathered gray.

The bridge has been assigned the following numbers: 29-05-01 in the World Guide to Covered Bridges published by the National Society for the Preservation of Covered Bridges; 163-053 by the New Hampshire Department of Public Works and Highways; and 29 by the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development.

Original Physical Appearance: The bridge was originally constructed without arches¹; when this alteration was made is not known.

¹Richard Sanders Allen, Covered Bridges of the Northeast (Brattleboro: The Stephen Greene Press, 1957), p. 108.



8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1849**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Engineering: The present Swiftwater Bridge at Swiftwater village is the fourth bridge to cross the Wild Ammonoosuc River at this site. The first bridge was built in 1810 and carried away by a flood in 1818; it was replaced in 1818 by a bridge that was destroyed by flood in 1828. This bridge was replaced in 1829, with this replacement remaining on the site until 1849 at which time it was dismantled and replaced by the current bridge.¹

Little mention is made of this bridge in the town meeting records at the time of its construction, for this reason it would seem likely that supervision of its construction fell to the town surveyors of highways and bridges who were Joseph Fifield and John H. Carbee² at the time. Both men had had a hand in the construction of the Bath Covered Bridge at Bath Village in 1831-32.³

The bridge is constructed in an unpatented truss design, developed by Peter Paddleford of Littleton, New Hampshire. The truss was spread by Paddleford and his assistants,⁴ making some connection between the Swiftwater Bridge and members of Paddleford's group likely.

Transportation: At the time of the bridge's construction, it served a logging community that had developed at Swiftwater village⁵. The bridge has a tradition of having survived many log jams, one of which is said to have been cleared by dynamite with many of the logs landing on the roof of the bridge without destroying the structure⁶.

Since its construction, the bridge has been maintained solely by the town of Bath without the use of state aid money⁷. The bridge remains in use by a small residential population with a load limit of six tons.

¹David Sutherland, Address Delivered to the Inhabitants of Bath (Boston: George C. Rand & Avery, 1855), p. 73.
²Town Clerk's Records, Selectmen's Office, Bath, New Hampshire, Vol 5, p. 165.
³Ibid., Vol. 4, pp. 188, 215, 261.
 Continued on Continuation Sheet 2

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Secondary Sources:
 Allen, Richard Sanders. Covered Bridges of the Northeast. Brattleboro: Stephen Greene Press, 1957. pp. 42, 108.
 Sutherland, David. Address Delivered to the Inhabitants of Bath. Boston: George C. Rand & Avery, 1855. p. 73.
 Continued on Continuation Sheet 3

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		44° 08' 02"	71° 57' 03½"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "		June 19		
SE	° ' "	° ' "		263-900 E	4890-800-N	
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1/40 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Brian R. Pfeiffer

ORGANIZATION: _____ DATE: 6/20/1974

STREET AND NUMBER:
135 Ivy Street

CITY OR TOWN: Brookline STATE: Massachusetts CODE: 23

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION **NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

<p>As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:</p> <p>National <input type="checkbox"/> State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Name <u>[Signature]</u></p> <p>Title <u>NH State Historic Preservation Officer</u></p> <p>Date <u>May 12, 1975</u></p>	<p>I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.</p> <p><u>[Signature]</u> Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation</p> <p>Date <u>11/21/96</u></p> <p>ATTEST:</p> <p><u>[Signature]</u> Keeper of The National Register</p> <p>Date <u>11.25.76</u></p>
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(Continuation Sheet) 2.

STATE New Hampshire	
COUNTY Grafton	
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(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE, continued

⁴Richard Sanders Allen, Covered Bridges of the Northeast (Brattleboro: Stephen Greene Press, 1957), p. 42.

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⁶Statement by Edwin Chamberlain, selectman of Bath, New Hampshire, personal interview, Bath, New Hampshire, June 1, 1974.

⁷Statement by Floyd Avery, secondary roads engineer, personal interview, Concord, New Hampshire, June 11, 1974.



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(Continuation Sheet) 3.

STATE New Hampshire	
COUNTY Grafton	
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	NOV 21 1976

(Number all entries)

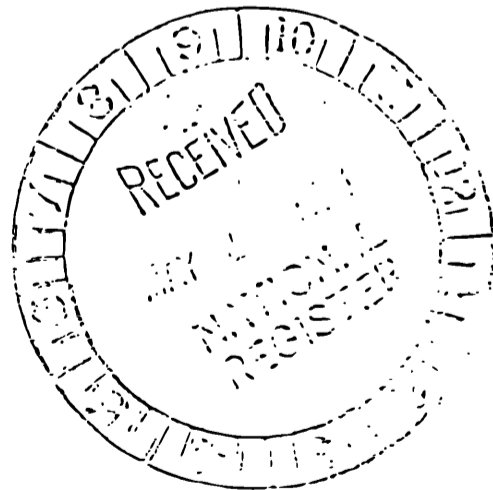
9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES, continued

Unpublished Sources:

Avery, Floyd. Personal interview. Concord, New Hampshire,
June 11, 1974.

Chamberlain, Edwin. Personal interview. Bath, New Hampshire,
June 1, 1974.

Town Clerk's Records, Selectmen's Office, Bath, New Hampshire,
Vol. 4, pp. 188,215,261; Vol. 5, p. 165.



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DATE ENTERED	MAY 21 1976

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA, continued

10.2 UTM References

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
19	2.63.900	48.90.800